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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NAIROBI 001710

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SUBJECT: SOMALIA: MADOBÉ PREPARING JUBA OFFENSIVE; GEDO
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Classified By: Somalia Unit Counselor Bob Patterson for reasons 1.4(b,d
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11. (C) Summary: Darod/Ogaden clan heavyweight Ahmed Madobe, in coordination with TFG officials, appears to be stepping up efforts to take Kismayo and consolidate control of Lower Juba. (Note: Hassan al-Turki is the nominal head of the Ras Kamboni group, which has been working to overthrow the TFG. In recent months Turki's top commanders Ibrahim Shukri and Madobe have worked behind the scenes to marginalize al-Turki and move against al-Shabaab. End Note.) Our contacts tell us TFG Minister of Defense, the TFG Minister of Finance, and the Prime Minister are aware of and support Madobe's plans. Madobe has been appointed head of an evolving Lower Juba entity, which is locally administered and has links to the TFG. Shukri has been appointed head of internal affairs. The appointments of Madobe and Shukri grew out of recent meetings in Juba and Nairobi between their supporters and predominantly Darod/Kabalah clan leaders and MPs (reftel). Our contacts report that many Marehan figures in Gedo, to include long-time warlord Barre Hirale, appear uninterested in cooperating with Lower Juba to form a Jubaland entity unless they are in charge. End summary.

Madobe Prepares for "War" with Al-Shabaab

12. (C) A close ally of Ahmed Madobe on August 12 told us that he had just returned from meeting Madobe at the Kenyan border. Madobe held a meeting in Dhoble on August 13, during which he reportedly assured NGOs and humanitarian organizations that they could operate in areas under his control. After the meeting Madobe told our contact that he intended to return to Kismayo and was preparing for war with al-Shabaab. Madobe said he recently traveled to Mogadishu to encourage his allies to take part in a Kismayo offensive. An Ogaden business figure close to Madobe, Mohamed Sheikh, on August 12 told us that Madobe said the focus should be on Kismayo. After Kismayo was under his control, consideration would be given to Gedo Region. Mohamed Shiekh told us that Madobe does not intend to push beyond lower Juba. Sheikh had just been in Mogadishu, where he met with the TFG Ministers of Defense and Finance and the Prime Minister, who all supported Madobe's plans. Shukri told the Minister of Defense that Madobe's plan was the kind of initiative that "he would fund." In Mohamed Sheikh's view, Darod/Kabalah

subclans were behind the evolving Lower Juba administration and would add currently inactive militia to the fight. (Note: Mohamed Sheikh is the chairman of Somalia's second largest telecom company. End note.)

13. (C) Our contacts tell us that Madobe has been appointed head of an evolving Lower Juba entity, which is locally administered and has links to the TFG while Ibrahim Shukri has been appointed head of the entity's internal affairs. Madobe's role is essentially military and Shukri's is administrative. The appointments grew out of recent meetings in Juba and Nairobi between the supporters of Madobe and Shukri and predominantly-Darod/Kabalah clan leaders and MPs. In mid-July a 27-person Steering Committee was formed for Jubaland, but our contacts say that arguments continue over who will occupy key positions (reftel). (Note: Madobe appears to both head the Ras Kamboni organization and an emerging Jubaland administration. Al-Turki is described as aging, marginalized within his Ogaden/Mohamed Zubeyr subclan, and increasingly loyal to al-Shabaab. Other contacts involved in the mid-July meetings tell us there was support for Madobe among the Darod/Kabalah leaders. End note.)

The Question of Gedo and the Marehan

14. (C) Darod/Kabalah contacts on August 12 told us there is disagreement between the Darod/Marehan clan in Gedo region about joining Lower Juba representatives to form a Jubaland. The most influential Marehan leaders in Gedo, to include long-time warlord Barre Hirale, appear uninterested in cooperating with Lower Juba to form a Jubaland unless they are in charge. Other Juba contacts report some Marehan support the idea, but they are the less influential and not

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well-armed members of the subclan. Many Darod leaders from Juba and Gedo reportedly agree on the general principle of a Jubaland state subordinate to the TFG, but remain divided over who will control Jubaland and the port of Kismayo. One option being considered is a Jubaland state with two regions, Middle Juba and Lower Juba. Middle Juba, in this scenario, would be predominantly Marehan and Lower Juba would be primarily Ogaden and Majerteen. Our contacts, however, indicate the Ogaden and Majerteen would insist on the presidency of a united Jubaland. Mohamed Sheikh said it is widely believed in Lower Juba that Ethiopia intends to support the Marehan's claims on Kismayo because Addis Ababa would be threatened by an Ogaden-led Lower Juba administration. (Note: The Ogaden is currently the most powerful subclan within the Darod/Kabalah in Lower Juba. The Darod/Kabalah also contains the Majerteen subclan. The Darod/Marehan power base remains Gedo region, or "Middle Juba." End note.)

Comment

15. (C) The emerging alternative to an al-Turki-led al-Shabaab in Lower Juba is a positive development. Madobe, Shukri, and their allies represent the most powerful subclan in Lower Juba. While there are certainly interests which are not represented in Lower Juba by the emerging Jubaland administration, there are probably not competing groups, aside from al-Shabaab, in Lower Juba which would pose a serious threat to Madobe and Shukri's forces. The Darod/Marehan power base is in Gedo and it is unlikely Marehan leaders would be able to move down the valley and confront Madobe and Shukri's forces without significant support from Ethiopia. While there appears to be increasing momentum behind an evolving Lower Juba administration that includes Madobe and Shukri, it appears clear that a Jubaland that includes Gedo region is far from a reality. We believe that the Marehan in Gedo will most likely view Ogaden military action in Lower Juba as a threat if it moves beyond Lower Juba's borders. Similarly, Marehan efforts to

militarily or politically lay claim to Kismayo will likely be strongly resisted by Madobe, Shukri, and their predominantly Darod/Ogaden allies. Finally, Madobe and Shukri's possible willingness to work with the TFG and negotiate with other leaders in the Jubas could shift as quickly as the ever-shifting Somali political sands.

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